

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09900 061423Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /049 W

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R 061230Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6965

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9900

FOLLOWING TEL CALCUTTA 1591 DTD 6 JUL 76 RCVD NEW DELHI
BEING REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CALCUTTA 1591

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, SK, BT

SUBJ: BHUTAN/SIKKIM AND GOI CUSTOMS

1. WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING FROM A RELIABLE SOURCE WITH EXCELLENT
CONNECTIONS TO THE BHUTAN AND SIKKIM ROYAL FAMILIES.

2. WANGCHUK NAMGYAL, SON OF THE CHOGYAL OF SIKKIM BY CHOGYAL'S
FIRST WIFE, WHILE DEPARTING CALCUTTA FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM IN
LATE JUNE WAS DETAINED BY AIRPORT CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES AFTER HE
WAS FOUND TO BE IN POSSESSION OF THREE LETTERS FROM THE QUEEN
MOTHER OF BHUTAN, KESANG WANGCHUK, A COUSIN OF THE CHOGYAL OF
SIKKIM, (WANGCHUK'S DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT HAD EXPIRED AND HE WAS
TRAVELING ON A REGULAR PASSPORT.) THE LETTERS WERE SEALED
AND HAD THE BHUTANESE ROYAL SEAL ON THE FLAPS OF EACH ENVELOPE
WERE ADDRESSED TO ONE OF HER CHILDREN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, TO
THE BEARER OF THE LETTER, WANGCHUK, AND TO HER BANKERS IN
LONDON. AT CUSTOMS OFFICERS REQUEST, WANGCHUK OPENED THE LETTER
ADDRESSED TO HIMSELF BUT REFUSED TO OPEN THE OTHER TWO; THERE-
UPON CUSTOMS OFFICERS OPENED THEM. THE LETTERS TO HER CHILD AND
TO WANGCHUK CONTAINED APPROXIMATELY \$1600 IN US CURRENCY. THE
OTHER LETTER REQUESTED HER BANKERS TO BRING HER ACCOUNT UP TO
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DATE AND CONTAINED INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE

ACCOUNT.

3. CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES HELD WANGCHUK OVERNIGHT WHILE AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM NEW DELHI ON WHAT FURTHER ACTION TO TAKE. NEW DELHI ORDERED WANGCHUK'S IMMEDIATE RELEASE AND THE RETURN OF THE FUNDS AND LETTERS. WANGCHUK, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT RPT NOT ACCEPT THE RETURN OF THE LETTERS OR THE FUNDS STATING THAT SINCE THE GOI OPENED THIS "PRIVILEGED CORRESPONDENCE" THE GOI SHOULD RETURN IT TO THE QUEEN MOTHER WIAN AN APPROPRIATE EXPLANATIN.

4. SOURCE SAYS THE GOI IS ATTEMPTING TO KEEP THIS INCIDENT QUIET SINCE THE LETTERS DID NOT RPT NOT CONTAIN ANY POLITICAL/ DIPLOMATIC NEWS OR INSTRUCTIONS, THE TRANSFER OF MONEY FROM BHUTAN TO THE UK DOES NOT VIOLATE INDIAN LAW. SOURCE BELIEVES DELHI OFFICIALS ARE EMBARRASSED BY OVERZEALOUS ACTIONS OF CALCUTTA CUSTOMS OFFICERS.
KORN

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: CUSTOMS DUTIES, PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE
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Draft Date: 06 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760788/aaaaczid.tel
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